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"Après tout, je n'ai entrepris la chose que sur l'exemple, je ne veux pas dire *des modernes, qui ne tire point à conséquences pour moi, mais sur celui des anciens.*"

Il suffit ainsi et il est nécessaire de remettre ces deux mots à leur place pour donner à la phrase un sens cohérent et logique.

Sans doute on peut s'étonner qu'une erreur de ce genre ait pu passer si longtemps inaperçue. Mais n'oublions pas qu'il s'agit d'une préface. Or le public lit peu les préfaces et les commentateurs même les plus avertis ne les épluchent guère. Quant à La Fontaine, bien qu'il fût en général aussi soigneux dans son travail d'écrivain que distrait dans sa vie pratique, il aura eu ce jour-là une petite somnolence et écrit un mot pour un autre. Comme son ami Vergier le lui disait à lui-même:

Eh! qui pourrait être surpris
Lorsque La Fontaine s'égare,
Lui dont la vie est un tissu d'erreurs.⁴

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SEVENTEENTH CENTURY REFERENCE TO SHAKESPEARE

The following seventeenth century (1649) reference to *1 Henry IV*, I, iii seems to be unknown:

What do'st thou mean to stand behind the noon
And pluck bright honour from the pale fac'd Moon?

(The italics are in the original.) The couplet is cited from a poem on the fourth page (unnumbered) of the introductory matter to a pamphlet called ΕΙΚΩΝ ΗΨΙΣΤΗ. Or, *The faithfull Pourtraicture of a Loyall Subject, in Vindication of ΕΙΚΩΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΚΗ*, published in 1649.

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SYLVESTRE BONNARD AND THE FAIRY

In the January number of *M. L. N.* (p. 56) Professor B. M. Woodbridge draws an interesting parallel between the apparition of a fairy, perched on the *Chronique de Nuremberg*, to Sylvestre Bonnard and the apparition of a playful Cupid to Philetas in

⁴ Vergier, *Lettre à La Fontaine*.

Daphnis and Chloë.¹ Yet, while Anatole France is no mean classical scholar, the most obvious influences on his work seem to be exercised by Renan and the *Conteurs* of the eighteenth century, in whose works a bibliophile and a sceptic would take delight: Jérôme Coignard, for instance, recalls Du Laurens' *Compère Matthieu*.² Now, the eighteenth century was quite fond of sophisticated and ironical fairies such as the one who played tricks on Sylvestre Bonnard.³ To point to only one example, in *La Poupée galant et littéraire*, 1891) a fairy takes the form of a doll, and is bought by an Abbé Philandre. While he is writing he is suddenly frightened by a voice (p. 209): "Mais je ne fus pas longtemps en suspens; la niche s'ouvrit et la poupée en sortit avec une petite démarche la plus aisée et la plus noble qu'on sauroit se figurer. Elle me salua en me faisant une révérence pleine d'une grâce infinie, et vint s'asseoir auprès de moi sur un tome des *Confessions du Comte de . . .*" This attitude resembles the one of Bonnard's fairy perched on the *Chronique de Nuremberg*. Moreover, even as Sylvestre Bonnard, who doubts the existence of fairies, suffers a sharp rebuff from the tiny lady, Philandre is censured by the impatient elf for his incredulity.

. . . Je suis une Sylphide. Une Sylphide! m'écriai-je. Pourquoi cet étonnement? dit-elle, en prenant un air sévère. Ce n'est point de l'étonnement, lui dis-je, c'est de la joie. Vous êtes un imposteur, reprit-elle en se levant brusquement et frappant de son petit pied sur la table. . . Je tremblai; il me sembla que la foudre alloit tomber sur moi. . . Je sais ce que vous venez de penser au sujet d'un grand homme à qui vous devez de la vénération; je veux que vous me le disiez, et avec les mêmes termes que vous venez de prononcer en vous-même.

Il est vrai, lui répondis-je; j'ai pensé dans cet instant que les sylphes et les sylphides et tous les esprits élémentaires n'avoient jamais existé que dans l'imagination burlesque du comte de Gabalis. Mais je reviens de mon erreur, je rends la justice qui est due à cet homme illustre. Il m'est bien aisé de me convaincre puisque la vérité est devant mes yeux; puis-je me refuser au prodige que je vois? A ces mots elle se replaça sur le même tome des *Confessions du comte de . . .*, et s'appuya sur un autre plus élevé, qui étoit près de celui des *Confessions*. Comment dépeindre les grâces séduisantes que lui donnoit ce petit air penché?

¹ H. Potez in *Les Sources du Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard*, Mercure de France, 1910, compares the description of the outward appearance of the fairy to a passage from About's *Le Roi des Montagnes*.

² Cf. G. Michaut, *Anatole France*, p. 162.

³ A number of eighteenth century fairy stories are listed in the *Catalogue . . . des livres de feu M. le Duc de la Valière*, VI, pp. 229-238. Fairies appear in a great number of other *Contes* of the epoch, and, as M. Michaut indicates, in the *Bibliothèque des Voyages*.

It is to be noted that a closer similitude exists between the apparition of the fairies in both *La Poupée* and *Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard*, than between the fairy in this last novel and Cupid in *Daphnis and Chloë*.

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A NOTE ON RICHARD CRASHAW

We now have evidence of Crashaw's precocity as a poet, of contemporary appreciation of him, of his taking Anglican orders, and an earlier date for his departure for Rome.

Under the date November 27, 1627, volume XIX of the publications of the Historical Manuscripts Commission¹ records the following (p. 128):

"A long list of persons to whom gowns and cloaks were given, on the occasion of a funeral in London. Lord Noel² and Richard Crashaw, the poet, are among them."³

The 1645-47 volume of the *Calendar of State Papers*, Domestic Series, of the Reign of Charles I⁴ (p. 467) contains a letter from Queen Henrietta Maria to Pope Innocent X, written from St. Germain-en-Laye, Paris, August 28, 1646:

"The Sieur Crashou [Crashaw?] having been a minister in England . . . This has induced me upon his present departure for Rome . . ."

From this one would infer that Crashaw had been an Anglican minister in England, and, since the Queen was writing late in August 1646, that he went to Rome earlier than we have believed, heretofore.⁵

The publications of the Historical Mss. Commission offer further proof of contemporary appreciation of Crashaw as a poet. With the mss. of Sir Geo. Wombwell (Vol. 69, Var. Coll. 2) are bound papers from the family Belasyse. The ms. of *An English Traveler's*

¹ Tenth Report, Appendix, Part VI—the mss. of Lord Brayne and others, 1887.

² Probably Lord Edward Noel of Ridlington (1582-1643). His heir married the second daughter of Crashaw's patroness, the Countess of Denbigh, to whom Crashaw addresses the first poem in *Carmen Deo Nostro*.

³ This offers further proof of Crashaw's precocity as a poet; cf. *Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit.*, VII, 37, for evidence of his birth in 1612.

⁴ Ed. William Douglas Hamilton, F. S. A., London, 1891.

⁵ *Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit.* (VII, 40) makes no mention of the Queen's communication with the Pope or of the date of Crashaw's departure for Rome. According to *D. N. B.* he went to Rome in 1648-9.